

Goods Movement

California's goods movement network of highways, rail lines, seaports, airports, and border crossings is an essential part of the State's interregional transportation system. California's goods movement strategy is laid out in the Goods Movement Action Plan (GMAP), developed between 2005 and 2007. The GMAP outlines a multimodal/interregional approach to address the economic and environmental issues associated with moving goods via the state's highways, railways and ports. The GMAP recognized the need to expand system capacity in tandem with significant reductions to the environmental and community health impacts associated with freight transportation.

Although the recent economic picture has substantially reduced overall trade volumes, economists expect recovery will occur over the next few years. For this reason, California must continue its strategic approach to freight transportation during a period of relative inactivity.

The following 'snapshot' provides a context for understanding the importance of the system to the State's economy and citizens, as well as its importance to the nation as a whole, and the continued need to plan and deliver appropriate infrastructure. It is clear from this snapshot that a standardized approach to planning for California's current and future goods movement transportation system will not only be inadequate but will actually be counterproductive. Thus, our planning efforts will continue to identify innovative partnerships, initiatives and funding opportunities.

2007 California Good Movement Facts

- California's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was \$1.7 trillion, which put California as the tenth largest economy in the world and represented 13 percent of the U.S. GDP. Considered as an independent nation, California would rank between Canada and Italy.
- 12 percent of the nation's population lived in California; international trade represented 25 percent of the State's economy.
- Hispanic buying power was estimated to be \$228 billion annually and California's Asian consumer market is estimated at \$150 billion annually.
- Exports accounted for 12 percent of total U. S. exports. California's top trading partners are Mexico, Canada, Japan, China and South Korea.
- Total trade equaled \$516 billion in exports and imports flowed through the state by air, land and sea. From 2006 to 2007, exports increased \$7 billion, to \$134 billion.
- Airborne agricultural exports totaled \$685 million (Los Angeles Basin and San Francisco Bay Area airports handled 93 percent of total California air cargo).
- California's goods movement infrastructure is important to the nation's economy in terms of both exports and imports. In 2006 over 8 percent of all goods moving into and out of America use California's highways, railroads, ports and airports and 45 percent of the nation's container volume surge through California's ports, highways and railways. This is a significant impact to the State's transportation and community infrastructure.

The GMAP was a significant policy initiative that supports subsequent actions, including the freight elements of Proposition 1B, and continues to guide freight-related decision-making. It also guides our input to the Surface Transportation Act currently being debated in Congress. The GMAP was specifically designed to be a living document with regular updates beginning with a major update in 2011. The 2005 priority project list will be revisited and revised in line with current conditions. The air cargo section and agriculture sections will be significantly expanded. Also to be expanded is goods movement infrastructure needs associated with tribal governmental economic development projects.

The State continues to invest in projects that will provide a safer, more effective transportation system for moving goods to and through California. Delivering the Trade Corridors Improvement Fund (“TCIF”) projects (nearly \$3 billion), and the Caltrans sponsorship of \$143.8 million in key freight rail projects from the federal government’s Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery -- “TIGER”--discretionary grant program are key components of this commitment. As the economy recovers, other efforts will be needed to meet the challenges that arise.

Caltrans is committed to improving the movement of goods in all areas of our transportation system and to reducing associated health impacts in our communities. Thus—beyond the State actions and initiatives described above--we’re also working with Congress as it develops the new Surface Transportation Act to increase our share of federal funding for projects at our borders, seaports and throughout our vital system of highways. We are also forging new and innovative partnerships with non-traditional industry sectors, such as the Class I railroads operating in California.

The attached map shows the primary goods movement corridors in California:

Freight Rail System Overview

California is a key state in the national freight rail system. In 2005, California railroads operated over 7,355 miles of track and carried over seven million carloads of freight. Railroad service plays a critical role to California, to the United States and the global economy. Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and Union Pacific (UP) serve the import and export markets for a large number of Pacific Rim countries. Approximately 45 percent of intermodal traffic entering or leaving the U.S. passes through California ports.

Rail capacity and constraints

Rail capacity has become more constrained due to the increasing volumes of cargo imported and exported into and out of the State through our major seaports and trade gateways. This increased trade is due to rapidly increasing population in California, other states and foreign countries that are served by the State’s rail infrastructure and goods movement industry.

Operational Conflicts: Passenger/Freight; Freight/Freight

In most areas of the State, rail passenger share rail rights-of-way (ROW) with freight railroads. In this case, the main issue is the capacity of the route to accommodate both rail passenger and freight rail. Statewide, shared use of ROW includes:

- Pacific Surfliner, San Joaquin, and Capitol Corridor;
- Southern California Metrolink commuter rail system;
- San Diego County Coaster commuter rail system;
- Caltrain commuter rail system in the San Francisco Bay Area;
- Altamont Commuter Express rail system.

Rail passenger operators have plans for adding more trains over the next several years. In some cases, rail capacity is insufficient to handle existing levels of both passenger and freight service, particular in the urban areas with substantial passenger and rail traffic.

Rail System Preservation

BNSF and UP have some 5,488 miles of track in the State. To improve productivity, profitability and maximize capacity, railroads have made many improvements. However, the high cost of these improvements has been limited to upgrading only the highest volume and most profitable lines, and leaving other lines downgraded or abandoned.

Many states believe freight service is vital to their economies and have made freight rail service, especially the preservation and retention of lower density branch lines, a significant part of their economic development and transportation programs. Therefore, it is critical to keep an inventory of inactive, underutilized, and abandoned rail segments and rail corridors for possible increased and or future use. Often times, when rail is removed for other purposes, the rail service is lost forever.

Source: Goods Movement Action Plan

http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/ogm/links_files/gmap-1-11-07.pdf

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Source: California Rail Plan

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/rail.go/dor/california-state-rail-plan/index.cfm>

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Priority Regions and Corridors in California

